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THE INDUSTRIAL LEAGUE TO ITS CONSTITUENTS.

THE Representative Council of the Industrial League having decided early in the winter that there was no necessity for its assembling, in view of the unlikelihood of a successful attack upon any American industry during the short session of Congress, the Executive Committee of the League now think proper to offer to its constituents a review of the situation.

Mr. Fernando Wood's remarkable attempt in the session of 1877-8, to overthrow the industrial system of his country, by removing the tariff barriers which guard it, brought into conspicuous no-

tice an unsuspected change of opinion upon this subject. He found that while the unflinching courage of the old Protectionists could not be intimidated, nor their acquiescence be purchased by artful special concessions, neither the great importing city of New York nor the populous prairies of the West could longer be counted on to give unbroken support to any Free Trade programme, and that a universal cry of distress and indignation arose from all parts of the country at the unsettlement in business occasioned by his meddling.

A feeling of conservatism had grown up in many Districts and had become powerful, almost unnoticed by their Representatives, many of whom were surprised at the earnestness of the remonstrances which they received from home. No doubt the blundering ignorance of the bill presented by Mr. Wood did much towards defeating it, but the general sentiment of disgust at uncalled-for disturbance of well settled industries—the conservative “let well enough alone” feeling or conviction—was a more important factor than ever before.

Nothing more distinctly marks the advance of the people in wisdom than the growth of this conservatism concerning commercial legislation. Its continued growth may be counted on in proportion as the people continue to examine the subject, until some better plan than that now existing shall be found for making such modifications as may from time to time be requisite or desirable. Our countrymen are now generally convinced that the tariff-tinkering attempted by every Congress is an insufferable nuisance, a perpetual menace not merely to a few, but to all the industries that support the nation; a constant invitation to foreigners to meddle in our law-making, and an irresistible temptation for oratory by Congressmen upon delicate and important matters which very few of them understand.

It is not a trifling or an easy matter to establish in any country such arts and industries as we possess, and which are but poorly symbolized by the various trees, plants, crops and stock of a large, well ordered and diligently cultivated plantation. They do not grow spontaneously; very few of the nations of the earth possess them. Those who are without them see that they are the main source of our national prosperity, and long to imitate us. Those who possess them and who know by experience the power and wealth they confer, aim to build up their interests at the expense of ours.

Upon looking back over the courses by which country after country has been raised from barbarism to civilization and empire, we find the same landmarks upon all ; indeed, we might almost say that all nations have travelled the same road. In the remote and pre-historic distance we observe that every part of the world has been occupied by men whose highest art was the making of weapons and tools from flints and bones, and whose principal industries were hunting and fishing. The metal workers who succeeded these, joined to the chase the care of flocks and herds, began to practise agriculture, improved their dwellings, sought to excel their neighbors in war by reason of superiority in arms, in industries and in intelligence, consolidated their governments, built great cities and temples, acquired wealth by trade, giving small products of their arts for large bulks of material, and by war or commerce extended their rule as widely as possible.

It is easy to understand that laws changed during such a national rise and progress as this, and that such laws as were suited to the men of the stone age, or of the pastoral or even of the agricultural age, were insufficient for the period of highest attainments, when new interests unknown to those simple times had sprung into existence, when the national life had to be defended from new modes of attack, and national prosperity and empire advanced by methods before unknown.

In this continental territory, however, we see all stages of such a progressive career co-existent, each upon a mighty scale, and each demanding the paternal care of national legislation fitted to its special needs.

It is but a short time—only half as long as the Saracenic dominion in Spain—since the men of the stone period held undisputed sway over the entire region now included in the United States of America. Gradually for the first two centuries, but during the last two at a frightfully accelerating speed, these primitive hunters have been pushed further from the Atlantic, and within the last few decades from the Pacific coast as well, until but a forlorn and persecuted remnant exists of the men who here represent the childhood of our race.

Pressing upon these, there has advanced toward the centre of the continent a belt of pioneers, partly hunters, partly miners, but mainly pastoral, and at this moment in Texas and New Mexico almost wholly pastoral, yet tending to become the purely agricultural

population next in order, which is seen at its best in the prairie country of Illinois or in the rolling lands of Minnesota. Succeeding them come the metal workers, whose home upon this continent has been that great State which is still their chief seat, Pennsylvania, but who abound also in New York, New Jersey and other Atlantic States, have poured a mighty stream into Ohio, and are invading Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Virginia and Alabama. With these metal workers, or closely following them, are textile workers, artisans and artists of every variety ; populations of the greatest refinement, intelligence, wealth and luxury, in close connection with the most advanced European communities and partaking largely of their ideas and customs.

What infinite complexity ! Yet all these belts of diverse stages of civilization crossing all the varied soils and climates from Canada to the Mexican Gulf, are to have and do have perfectly free exchange among themselves of all their multifarious productions which supplement each other so thoroughly, thus maintaining a gigantic system of Free Trade such as no other part of the world ever paralleled ; they are to be governed and are governed in all their commercial relations with other countries by a single uniform law, a law so contrived as to promote the growth of all industries needful to our wants and to foster the interdependence and mutual support of our citizens, while drawing from foreigners much of the money needed for governmental expenditures.

How gradually and painfully such a law has been built up can be but feebly imagined by those who have not been obliged to study the question ; how many struggles, often fomented by hungry foreign traders, have occurred during those different waves of progress ; how earnestly each point of difference has been debated and how ingeniously accommodated cannot now be explained at length, but, as the result, we have that great body of practical law, known as our Tariff system. It was inevitable that this system should be, to great extent, a series of compromises, for though opinions swayed this way or that as the contending forces of foreign greed in alliance with domestic prejudice, *versus* American enterprise stimulated by the desire of gain, did battle over the whole great field, yet terms were in every case and in every part established ; every line of the complicated law has a reason and a history ; every provision is an item in a treaty of peace, mostly marking American progress and victory, and on each depend important interests.

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TO THE WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION

Political Economy

that arise from the political economy of the state

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RELATIONS BETWEEN THE STATE AND THE INDIVIDUAL

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE STATE AND THE INDIVIDUAL
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ENTHUSIASTIC PATRIOTISM

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That complex mass of rules was not invented by one or more closet theorists, as John Locke invented a constitution for South Carolina, but has grown from the small beginning which Washington approved at the foundation of our government, by many changes and additions, as the common law of England grew, until, like that, it reaches and has a vital hold upon every class and every individual in the land. All understand that their transactions are to be fitted to it; they are fitted to it from the greatest to the smallest, and all enjoy under it such reasonable degree of prosperity as the circumstances of the age permit; in no other country, and under no other commercial laws, has equal prosperity existed. While not more perfect than other human codes upon other subjects, it fairly expresses the wants and will of the nation, and is most thoroughly a part of every man's daily life.

This elaborate, far reaching and delicate system, entwined, as it is, into all parts of our business fabric, Mr. Wood proposed to overthrow—not to amend it carefully in those parts where experience had shown defects, but to topple over the whole vast and venerable American edifice, in order to erect in its place a crazy structure contrived by a foreigner who had so long been tolerated in the New York custom house that he had grown to imagine himself an authority. Unfortunately, Mr. Wood is a member of the next Congress, and unfortunately other Congressmen—the more ignorant, the more fanatical—are sure to make new attacks upon this beneficent system, and if not upon the whole, then upon some one or more points which they fancy to be most vulnerable, thus aiming to destroy it in detail.

So far as anything like reasons or pretexts are urged for such hazardous experiments, they are certainly rather stale and threadbare. The first of them, that protective duties raise the price of manufactured goods, thus inflicting a tax upon all consumers, is overthrown: Firstly, by the experience of England, whose manufactures, stimulated for several generations by careful tariff laws, attained such magnitude, such skill on the part of employers and workmen, and such wealth, that they became able to undersell all competitors, and thus to challenge all the world to Free Trade warfare. Secondly, by our own experience, for after eighteen years of unbroken tariff rule, all manufactured goods are now by far cheaper in this country than ever before.

The second pretext, that protective tariffs violate a sort of Gos-

pel which manufacturing England began a few years ago to preach, and that such tariffs, therefore, involve a sort of blasphemy of which no really cultured people should be guilty, is met by the facts that every civilized country in the world maintains just such a tariff system as is called for by its national treasury and its business interests, and that all, after a period of more or less delusion by the English prophets, are establishing more firmly the protective features of their tariffs. They are all adhering more distinctly to the principles declared by the Emperor of Germany, in his address to the *Reichstag*, Feb'y 11th, 1879, *viz.*, "Our commerce has a right to claim that protection which legislation regarding customs taxes can afford. . . . My duty is to preserve a German market for articles of home production." Finally, that the English themselves, finding foreign markets everywhere closing to them, and foreign goods intruding into their home markets, are beginning to cry out against Free Trade.

The third pretext, that exportations of manufactured goods are prevented by protective tariffs, is well answered by our own recent experience, for, as the natural end and result of our long period of protection, our manufactures of many sorts are going abroad in quantities hitherto unknown. It might be considered self-evident that only industries firmly established in the home trade can extend their enterprise to foreign exportations, but the theory having been much insisted upon, that industries are so enervated by protection as to be unable to look beyond the frontier, peculiar interest attaches to the recent researches of Mr. A. Lohren of Berlin. He proves that in the German Empire, exactly the classes of goods which are protected by an adequate import duty, are those which have been able to fill their own markets and overflow into foreign lands; that the classes slightly and inadequately protected have failed to hold their own, and that an excess of them is imported; finally, that the classes which are admitted duty free (not including tropical goods), are imported in enormous excess.

Surely, we should be able to assume that no efforts of ill-informed gentlemen, no matter how strongly aided or shrewdly guided by interested foreigners, shall hereafter be able to sacrifice, for the gratification of an idea, the national prosperity and independence, by exposing our manufactures to destruction at the hands of our rivals and trade enemies.

No party professing patriotism can hereafter afford to avow

such a policy. A main title of the Republican party to the country's support, has been and is its firm adherence to a patriotic policy of caring for the nation's working people and their employers in this respect. The Democratic party was originally, as is well known, the champion of domestic manufactures against New England's Free Trade; and only because of an imaginary necessity of combatting its antagonist's policy at all points, has it of late years appeared as the enemy of American Industry; many distinguished Democrats, however, (among them the venerable president of this League, Maj. Gen. Robert Patterson), are ardent protectionists.

The question is not one for political parties to divide upon, nor for rambling debate in Congress, but for the careful and continuous study of a special commission, with whom alone all proposed changes in tariff details should originate.

At present, the most menacing danger before us is the negotiation of special commercial treaties with separate nations, a danger the more real because it is insidious. What is a commercial treaty? Setting aside such minor matters as stipulations for port dues, etc., a commercial treaty is a solemn engagement by two nations that, for the period named therein—say for ten or twenty years—each contracting nation shall levy and collect upon goods imported from the other, no more than the rates of duty named in the schedule appended.

Now, a treaty is negotiated by the Department of State, it may be at the wish or suggestion of the other government, or of our own Executive; by the usage of the department, everything relative to the treaty is kept profoundly secret; it is counted rather impertinent for a citizen to enquire politely at the State Department whether one is being considered, and it is a violation of official duty for any one in the department, below the Secretary of State, to say yes or no to such a question. The treaty being thus secretly "negotiated," to the satisfaction of the representatives of the other contracting party, it is in due time submitted to the Senate and referred to its Committee on Foreign Affairs, where it is considered in secret and reported back to the Senate with an affirmative or negative recommendation, or with modifications. The Senate again debates upon it with closed doors, and if it should be approved, it is, when signed by the President, and ratified by the other party, the supreme law of the

land, although no one outside of official circles can properly have had any opportunity to know what are its provisions.

Should the treaty be a commercial one, like the famous or infamous Reciprocity Treaty with Canada, or the disgusting little treaty with Hawaii, so much deference is paid to the House of Representatives, that the treaty is stipulated to become binding when the necessary legislation shall have been enacted; this, however, in practice avails little or nothing, because it is held that the national faith has been fully pledged by the constitutional treaty-making power, the President and the Senate, and that the representatives of the people have no discretion, but must meekly ratify the acts of their superiors. It avails nothing, even though one of the most important privileges of the House of Representatives—that of originating all measures relating to the revenue—is quite nullified by the assumption that rates of import duty may thus be established, which have not only not originated in, but perhaps are disapproved by, the House.

The natural suggestions that the Senate need not ratify a treaty, and that the House need not legislate against its will, have less force than might at first appear, for Executive influence upon individuals, and watchful choice of time and opportunity, are hard to resist; we remember also that the House was prevailed upon to legislate into activity the phenomenally one-sided Canadian Reciprocity, and the swindling little Hawaiian treaty, which gratuitously releases to a few speculators duties on Hawaiian sugars of greater amount than our entire exports to that country. That such an autocratic or aristocratic style of fixing duties upon imported goods is totally unsuitable for this country must be obvious upon consideration of these points. First; The national existence depends, in emergencies at least, if not constantly, upon the nation's power to alter freely, promptly and at will its laws for the raising of revenue; a foreign or intestine war may imperatively require that taxation shall be immediately increased, that the revenue from customs upon imports shall be doubled, not when some foreign power or powers shall consent, but now. Yet, if we have tied our hands by stipulating with sundry nations that no change shall be made in the rate of duties on articles imported from them for the term of ten or twenty years, this vitally necessary increase cannot be made except at the risk of

offending powers capable perhaps, by joining our enemies, of inflicting upon us grievous disasters. Secondly:—That most important safeguard of republican, or even constitutional government, that the lower House alone, the most direct representative of the People, shall have the power to originate money bills or measures affecting the revenue, is thoroughly evaded and sacrificed by the subterfuge of first pledging the national faith through its treaty-making power, and then calling on the People's Representatives for a modification of domestic laws in obedience to the treaty stipulations. If this style of legislation can be practised in the United States, then the United States are ready for a master, and the struggles for liberty of England and of this country for the past three centuries have been in vain. Thirdly:—The State department is incompetent to decide wisely what rates of import duty are wholesome for the interests of this country. No one man knows, even roughly, all parts of this country's trade interests, and in every attempt to change the tariff it becomes plainly manifest that only by the freest consultation and comparison of views with many practical manufacturers, merchants and other citizens can the data needful to wise legislation be obtained; no less plainly is it manifest that all interests of producer, consumer, importer and trader are so intertwined and fitted to existing laws that changes must be made with great caution. A secret power, ignorantly dictating the most important changes, without the study, consent or knowledge of the parties concerned, is, in our form of government, a monstrous anomaly. Fourthly;—No matter what rates of import duty are to day suitable, and even if a great emergency for revenue should not arise, it is most rash to presume that the existing rates are certain to be the most advantageous in all respects for a defined future period of years to come. Who can foresee the inventions, the revolutions in industry and trade, which those years may bring forth, and why should we deprive ourselves of the natural right which even a crab enjoys, of casting his shell and providing a more commodious one if his growth requires it? Fifthly;—The complexity of administering tariff laws when the same articles coming from different countries are subjected to different rates of duty, may perhaps be imagined. It is hard enough, even with the best intentions, to administer a law fixing one rate upon each article, no matter whence derived, but this is simplicity, compared with the vista of claims

by importers, by the treaty governments, and by undersold home producers, which a batch of special treaties opens to the mental vision. The further probability of trouble with governments having no special treaty, but claiming all the rights of "the most favored nation" according to the customary treaty stipulation, need not here be enlarged upon.

The intelligence and patriotism of the President of the United States, and of his distinguished Secretary of State, are conceded, but is it not too much to expect that, exposed as they may be to the urgent representations of interested foreigners supported by infatuated domestic intriguers, they should, in the absence of any expression against Commercial Treaties, resist all such unwholesome influences? The grotesque little treaty with Hawaii, which bestows, in the most uncalled for manner, a princely revenue as a gratuity to a few sugar refiners in San Francisco, is a recent demonstration that inherent absurdity cannot be relied upon to defeat such projects, while the success of that raid is a challenge to other enterprising minds, who, now that the example is set, may hope to achieve like victories.

At this moment, the strange spectacle looms above our horizon of a voluntary and self-appointed delegation from France, coming to this country for the purpose of bringing about a commercial treaty between France and the United States; a spectacle all the more strange, that Gen. Noyes, the American Minister to the French Government, and Consul-General Fairchild, condescended to attend a meeting in Paris of these voluntary and unauthorized treaty-concocters. It may be hoped, but can perhaps hardly be expected, that these gentlemen will be reminded by their own government of the irregularity of their conduct in thus countenancing an effort, by notoriety-seeking American Free Traders and French private citizens, to prejudge an important question concerning treaty engagements, which has had no sign of approbation from either government, and which may probably, if ever brought formally to the attention of Messrs. Noyes' and Fairchild's official superiors, be condemned by them.

M. Leon Chotteau, the French leader in this scheme for overthrowing our form of government, has the backing of some chocolate makers, wine growers and dealers, and silk manufacturers, in his own country, but has not that of any great mass of his

fellow citizens, nor any authorization from his own government, yet he has been and will again be received by our easily tickled Boards of Trade and populace, so far as he comes to their notice, as if he were the emissary of a real power. It is not, however, safe to presume that he will make no impression or produce no effect, for a body, no matter how insignificant, can when vigorously impelled make its mark upon a much larger body resting inert, as a tallow candle may be shot from a musket through a pine board.

Of a totally different nature is the aspect of commercial relations with our neighbor on the North, where we see with interest that Canada in her turn is giving her adhesion to the policy of fostering home industries. It must be admitted, however, that the smallness of her population and of her home markets, the exclusively Northern character of her productions in contrast with the almost unlimited variety of ours, and the immense extent and expensiveness of her customs line, render her an unfavorable subject for a separate experiment. Moreover, her system will be incomplete and ineffective if it does not protect her against the Transatlantic competition which is by far more formidable than ours.

A commercial union with the continent, of which geographically she is a part, and with which she is connected by identity of race, would afford her large and unrestricted markets, free participation, perhaps, in our coasting trade, with other commercial advantages too numerous to specify ; and at the same time, give her the needful protection against that European competition from which her rising industries have most to fear ; it would, in fact, afford to her what we already enjoy, all the practical advantages of both Free Trade and Protection.

Obviously, no policy of tariff legislation hostile to the United States can long be sustained in Canada, since her chief markets for barley, lumber, fish and other products, as well as her indispensable access to the sea across our territory can be cut off at pleasure, whenever her tariff policy shall have become sufficiently annoying to provoke retaliatory legislation from our government.

When she shall ask for commercial union and equality, under our tariff system, it will doubtless be to our interest that her advances shall be met by a frank acceptance ; but meantime, no project for a delusive Reciprocity Treaty should be entertained for a moment ;

our former unsatisfactory experiment in that direction tended to the estrangement of two populations who are remarkably free from such animosities as often embitter the inhabitants of opposite sides of a frontier line, and whose real interests and aims are to a great extent intrinsically similar and accordant.

In a similarly broad spirit should our intercourse with Mexico be treated. That spacious and magnificently endowed region, capable of yielding to us all that has been hoped for from Cuba and Brazil, and of taking from us vast quantities of the various fabrics which we desire to sell, must soon, by an inevitable extension of railroads, be brought into intimate connection with this country. Her naturally not unfriendly people may be taught by fair and profitable traffic to forget the suspicions born of their disasters during our dark period of slaveholders' rule, and they also may propose a full and free commercial union on the basis of her adopting our tariff system in its entirety as towards all other countries, and abrogating the customs frontier between us. If this should be asked under circumstances which would guarantee the sufficiency and integrity of her customs service, might it not be granted, and might not our vast existing area of absolute Free Trade be thus extended to the still wider proportions of the North American Continent?

To recapitulate: The Industrial League congratulates the nation upon the failure of all attempts to overthrow our tariff system; it reminds its constituents that similar attempts are sure to be made in the future, and that constant vigilance and mutual support are necessary to the common defence; it warns its friends and the public against any coquetting with the principle or practice of fixing tariff rates by commercial treaties; it commends any measure tending to an ultimate commercial union or Zoll-verein with Canada and with Mexico; finally it repeats its often expressed conviction that the revision of our tariff should be committed to a small and carefully chosen commission of legislators and laymen, who alone should be empowered to submit to Congress projects of change in the Tariff laws.

JOSEPH WHARTON,
HENRY C. LEA,
WHARTON BARKER,

Executive Committee of the Industrial League.

Philada., March 1st, 1879.